



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

December 18, 2003

Honorable Jim Turner
U.S. House of Representatives
Select Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Turner:

In response to your letter of November 21, 2003, I would like to provide an overview of the development of the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC). As you know, the TSC was established per Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6 to consolidate the U.S. government's approach to terrorism screening.

On December 1, 2003, the TSC began providing 24/7 Call Center response to service requests for assistance in the identification of terrorist subjects. The TSC continues to provide international terrorist (IT) identification information to a number of Federal entities. This IT information is, for the first time, being provided to State and local law enforcement agencies through their National Crime Information Center (NCIC) terminals. The Center also provides information regarding domestic terrorist subjects via the NCIC to Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies.

The Center coordinates the appropriate law enforcement responses in concert with the FBI's Counterterrorism Watch and local Joint Terrorism Task Forces. Both Federal and State law enforcement officials, including those who screen individuals at ports of entry and those who screen visa applications, are able to make requests and receive information from the TSC.

The TSC's Call Center has been designed to provide specific information to authorized users to allow the user sufficient time to take appropriate action. The TSC has designed an "Encounter Management Process" to immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency once a positive or possible positive identification has been made, and to coordinate and disseminate that response to all the appropriate agencies.

The TSC's business procedures were crafted in response to the unique individual needs of each agency. The information provided meets the specific needs and enforcement policies/criteria of those agencies participating in the U.S. screening process..

Controls have been established to verify that the TSC data is accessed by and provided to authorized customers only. Recently, the TSC Director established a multi-agency working group to review privacy impact issues.

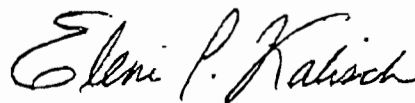
The TSC is currently in the test phase of the consolidated database application which will assimilate available terrorist information into one unified database. The Terrorist Screening Data Base (TSDB) will provide the TSC with the flexibility to conduct advanced algorithmic searches on vast amounts of data. The TSC is working with the Intelligence Community, international agencies, and other Federal law enforcement agencies to obtain information on individuals suspected of terrorism for addition to the TSDB.

The TSC has developed a "Nomination Process" to control those names to be placed in the TSC database. The TSC has set forth guidelines for contributing Federal agencies and has established a review process. This review process will result in the TSC accepting or rejecting a nomination. For those records that are rejected, procedures are in place to provide feedback in order to allow for re-submission of a name. Procedures are in place to allow for the modification or deletion of a record by authorized entities.

The TSC has also designed a "Misidentification and Deletion Process." This system, together with other controls, will ensure the accuracy of the TSC database. The TSC has established "Ombudsman" positions to address and manage the misidentification of persons in the TSC database.

The TSC will strive to provide a unified terrorist screening database and a coordinated, timely approach to the terrorist screening process. I look forward to reporting to the House Select Committee on Homeland Security of progress in the months to come. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Eleni P. Kalisch
Assistant Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

cc: The Honorable Chris Cox

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Tom Ridge
Secretary
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Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable George J. Tenet
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
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The Honorable John Ashcroft
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